

THE

# CHILD'S FRIEND.

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## A TRUE STORY.

ONE cold, stormy evening in the middle of winter, a family consisting of four children and their parents were gathered round a bright, blazing fire. One merry looking little girl was sitting close by her mother, with a large, beautiful cat in her lap, which she was stroking, while Miss Puss was purring her satisfaction at her happy lot; an older girl was assisting her mother, who was employed at some needlework; the oldest boy was getting his lesson; the youngest, was sitting on his father's knee. "How the wind roars," said little Robert, as a tremendous blast came swelling and moaning over the fields and rushed against their dwelling, which, saving one old elm tree that bent its protecting branches over it, stood all alone exposed to the shock of the wind, with nothing to prevent it from working its will against it. "Shan't we blow over, father?" said the child. "No, dear, we have stood higher winds than this." "Now it dies away," said

Helen, as for a moment she stopped caressing her favorite. "The storm is taking breath," said Ned, "now you can hear it a great way off; it sounds like a troop of horse galloping up—now it comes nearer and nearer—Hurrah! there it comes again, hurrah! hear the poor old elm creak and groan, and hear the icicles rattling down. I hope none of the branches will break, but I am afraid the ice is too heavy for them." "Think of poor old Fanny to-night," said Julia, the elder girl; "in her little cottage, and the walls so thin, mother, what will she do?" "Her house 'is so small that the wind seems to pass her by," said her mother, "and when it is so cold as it is to-night, the poor soul goes to bed and lies there till it is warmer. Many a time I have found her in bed in the morning, and given her some breakfast, and advised her to lie there till she could get up with comfort." "It is so still now," said Robert, "that I can hear the flakes of snow on the window-panes." "And so do I," said little Helen, "and the wind seems to say hush! hush!" "I should not think you could hear anything while Puss is purring so loud in your ears," replied Ned, "Do put her out of the room; I had rather hear the loudest wind that ever blew than hear a cat purr, purr, purr so forever—it makes my head spin to hear it—hush Puss! stop purring."

Puss purred on all the same, for Ned's words were followed by no hostile act towards her. No one, much less Helen's pet, was ever treated inhospitably at Mr. Nelson's fireside.

And now there was a short silence in the happy group, and nothing was heard but the fitful wind without, and the crackling of the fire, and the contented sound of the

purring cat within. Mrs. Nelson was the first to speak. "Is it not time," said she, "for John to return from the village? I cannot help expecting a letter from James, if," and the color left her cheeks; "if he was alive and well I am sure he must have written, and we must have a letter by Captain S." "I hear John coming up the avenue now," said Ned, and in a moment he was gone to see what packages he had brought from the stage office, and in another he was back again with a parcel in his hand. "Here father," said he, "here are the newspapers, and here, mother, is a big letter from Uncle John for you. Do see quick what he says, and whether it is to invite us all to pass next Saturday at his house."

His mother opened her brother's letter; "A letter from Jemmy," said she with a voice trembling with joy. "A letter from Jemmy," said all the children together, and in a moment each one was silent in order to listen to its contents. Let us listen also.

"DEAR MOTHER—Here we are all safe and sound; but when you get this, you will, I know, thank God you have yet a son Jemmy. I have kept a sea journal which you and father can see when I get home, so I shall say nothing more about our voyage except that I got along very well considering I was a green hand, and that I made friends with the mates and all the sailors. Oh they were so kind to me! and lucky it was for me that they did love me so well, as you'll see presently. Well, to my story. I hate to come to it, for it makes me feel so badly; but don't be frightened, mother, here I am on shore as lively as a cricket, and could make as much noise in your house now as I ever did. Well, dear mother, all, as I said, went well with me till one night

when we were on the Grand Banks ; it was a rain-storm, and the captain sent me up to the topmast to reef a sail ; some one had been up in the course of the day and dropped some grease, and I think my foot slipped ; I was confused, the rain beat in my face, I could not see anything, and I fell. You know the steeple of our church ; it was from a greater height than the top of that. I must have been stunned, for I am sure some time must have passed before I found myself overboard, struggling to keep myself above water. In a moment I saw my whole danger, I knew that the ship must have gone on some distance, and that it was useless to try to swim after her. I did not think they would know I had fallen overboard for some time, and I knew that in such a dark, stormy night it was almost impossible for them to do anything to save me. You know, dear mother, I am an excellent swimmer, but I immediately thought that my only chance was to save my strength as much as possible, so I turned over on my back and floated, and determined to keep myself as quiet as I could, so as not to exhaust myself before the boat came for me, which was what I hoped for, though I knew there was a small chance of it, on such a night. In a few moments I saw indistinctly one of those great birds that follow after vessels hovering over me, and I felt his horrid wings brushing over my face. I used one of my arms to drive him away, while with the other I kept myself on the top of the waves ; they rolled high, and as they broke over me, repeatedly filled my mouth with the bitter water, so that I could not scream to let them know where I was, in case the boat was out after me. Presently more birds, smaller however, fluttered their frightful wings over me, but the large one, whose



wings I am sure extended as far as I could stretch my arms, was the worst; he kept hovering over me; oh, I can see the frightful creature now! Well, mother, don't be scared, for here I am as well as ever. I found my strength began to fail me. I could not see the ship; the cold was terrible; the horrid birds, and the waves were rolling over me. I thought of you and father, my brothers and sisters, my dear home—and I felt as if I could not bear my sufferings any longer, and that I had better give up, and not try to keep above water any longer, and I was about turning myself over and letting myself go, when I saw a black thing at a distance which I took for a porpoise; but while I was looking to see what it was, I heard the words, Jemmy! Jemmy! and I called out, Here I am! This was the first sound I had been able to make from the time I had fallen over, for if I opened my mouth it filled with water. They soon had me in the boat, and in a few moments I was in the ship. Every thing was done for me, that love and kindness could do. I could not have stood it much longer. It was three quarters of an hour that I had been in the water. They told me afterwards that when they found I had fallen overboard, they put the ship about; but as they heard no sound from me, and knew not whereabouts I had fallen, the captain said it was useless to do anything to save me. The steward and cook and one of the men were getting out the boat, but it had a bad leak in it, and the captain said he would not risk the lives of three of his men to save one; that the boat could not live in such a night, and forbade their going after me. They would not listen to him; they said they would not give me up: and they lowered the boat. One of the men bailed all the

time, and as he had nothing else to stop the leak with, he put his foot in the place, and he kept it above water. By the merest chance they steered directly for the spot where I was. So you see, mother, it was their love and their courage that saved my life. The captain forgave them; he was right, and yet I cannot call them wrong. I thank God for their safety more than for my own.

Now, dear mother, you will not feel anxious about me any more, for I think you may be sure that nothing worse will happen to me than has happened already on this voyage. I hope to be with you in a month after you get this, and I don't think I shall want to go to sea again for one while. My love to father and the boys, and to Julia and Helen and the cat, and all inquiring friends. Glad enough I shall be to be with you all again. I never knew before, dear mother, how much I loved you all.

"Your aff'ate son, JEMMY."

"P. S. After my fall I could not stand for a fortnight, but they all took the kindest care of me, and I am well now as possible."

It were vain to attempt to describe what passed in the hearts of these parents at hearing of the safety of their son after such a peril. The letter was read over and over again, and each one expressed their happiness in their own way; little Helen wondered he should have thought of Puss; but said it was just like Jemmy. "I would not believe such a story if I had it from any other but James himself," said his father. "Nothing so uncommon as to save a person that falls overboard in such a way, and at night I never knew of it—and I have been many years at sea. Nothing but James' presence of

mind and courage saved his life ; he did the only thing that would have been of any avail ; had he attempted to swim after the ship, he would have been lost. It seems now as if it could not be true. His presence of mind and his courage and his knowledge of swimming would however have been of little use to him, if the love of the sailors for him had not been stronger than the love of their own lives ; they put them in the greatest peril to save this poor boy who a few weeks before was an utter stranger to them. How noble, how beautiful, and these were what we call common sailors. The glory of the wise and so called great of this world fades away as we look at this simple act of self-devoted love. In the hearts of each of these men we see the angel that God has placed within us all, ever declaring, if we would listen to it, that love is greater than life, that there is no death to the soul."

The children not long after retired to bed ; the thought of dear brother Jemmy made them insensible to the storm ; all was sunshine and peace in their young hearts. The parents sat up many hours of that stormy night talking over and over again the story of their boy's imminent danger and of his miraculous escape. They were rejoiced at this manifestation of his courage and presence of mind, which had enabled him in this moment of sore peril to do the best thing, in the right time, and in the right way ; but most were their hearts affected, and most deeply were their souls moved with reverence for the unbought, uncalculating, heroic love of the unnamed, unknown sailors who had saved their son's life at the hazard of their own. The hoarse breathings of the wild storm that beat against their house that night, its alternate

deep, far-off moanings and its shrill pipings through every loop-hole and crevice in their dwelling, sounded to their heaven-attuned souls like solemn music, and joined in sweet accord as they raised their souls in silent, grateful prayer to the Infinite Spirit. E. L. F.

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TO MY YOUNG FRIEND,

WHO SOMEWHAT CARELESSLY EXCLAIMED, "I AM GROWING  
WORLDLY."

Growing worldly! God preserve thee  
From a sere and withered youth;  
Save thee from that burning anguish,  
Waiting on the soul's untruth.

Growing worldly! Weigh the meaning!  
Chaining down thy spirit's flight;  
Wearing sackcloth—eating ashes—  
Loving darkness more than light.

Age by age, hath subtle nature  
Slowly wrought the wondrous birth;  
Closing over central burnings  
Crust on crust to form the earth.

Read'st thou not in olden story  
Fearful tales of monkish doom?  
Vows to God a maid hath broken,  
Sad her fate—a living tomb!

Onward moves the stern procession,  
Abbot, monk and menial pale;  
Donjon keep and workman's hammer,  
Deaf to sinful maiden's wail.

Life shut up in death's dominions,  
 Doom'd of men, of God bereft,  
 Who may tell the spirit's anguish  
 Ere the suffering clay is left !

Growing worldly ! read the lesson,  
 Nature's voice, and man's decree ;—  
 Spirit fires in earth are buried,  
 Life in death may swallowed be.

Growing worldly ! God preserve thee,  
 Give thee everlasting youth !  
 Fill thy spirit with the blessing,  
 Waiting on a life of truth.

S.

Boston, February 3, 1845.

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#### THE LETTERS OF THE COUNTESS OF BUKEBURG.

MANY of our young friends who are accustomed to read merely for entertainment, will probably turn from the following pages with disappointment, and wonder at our offering them what they will consider as so very dull and dry ; and yet they have often read with interest accounts of the happy and triumphant deaths, and of the remarkable conversions and religious experiences, of young persons of their own age. Those who are in the habit of purchasing books for juvenile libraries, well know that every collection of volumes for the young, from the Sabbath School Union Depository downwards, consists in a very considerable proportion of works of technical theology—that even the stories prepared for



children of four and five years of age, often abound in sectarian phrases, by which the particular denomination from whence they proceed can be discerned at a glance, while the familiar use of such phraseology, is considered by multitudes as a sufficient test of a religious character.

With the express purpose of deviating from this beaten track, we insert the following letters in this little work. If asked to which class of Christians, the orthodox or liberal, their author belonged, we frankly answer that we do not know. The letters must speak for themselves. They bear the stamp of a pure and elevated spirit, continually rising to God, and soaring high above all sectarian littleness. To our female readers they are especially commended, as being written by a young wife and mother to her minister, seeking direction, counsel and consolation; and they are valuable on account of their sincerity and artlessness; being composed after no prescribed form, but expressing the genuine thoughts and feelings of the writer upon the concerns of her soul. A spirit of unaffected humility, resignation, love to God and universal benevolence breathes through them all.

Caroline Herder introduces them with the following prefatory remarks.—“The deceased Countess carried on an uninterrupted correspondence with Herder; usually it was upon the concerns of her soul, which she laid open to him with the utmost ingenuousness; sometimes it related to the care of the poor, which she generally committed to him during her absences; and sometimes it was about her friends, her books, and even her husband for whom she entertained a profound reverence and affection, not to be mistaken. Indeed, through her letters, a far more favorable idea is obtained of him and of his

connexion with Herder, than from the picture presented of him in the preceding sketch.

Upon Herder, the Countess exercised a deep and most beneficial influence through his whole life. She had been to him as a good angel, to gladden his days at Bukeburg. In the gloomy hours when every thing looked black around him, she endeavored by the strongest and tenderest consolations which religion and friendship could offer, to encourage him to be patient, and to hope that he was a blessing to many in his office, she raised him to a cheerful trust in God, and whenever she obtained oral or written evidence that he was doing good, she would communicate it to him in her next letter. He himself became through her more inclined,—I might even say more reconciled to believe in the spirit and progressive course of the religion of the heart, the interior Christian life, which was so peculiarly her own, than he had ever been before. On the other part, she was delivered through Herder, from the oppressive religious narrowness and punctiliousness in which she had been fettered by her early religious associates; and the happiness experienced by such a spirit, upon being lifted out of the dark school-room of a formal, mystical, ascetic, methodistical piety, into the full light of Christianity, and expansive views of the ways and works of God, appears through these pages in characters of light and gladness.

One hundred and five of the Countess's letters still remain; of those from Herder to her—only one. In her last sickness she destroyed them all, and requested Herder to do the same. She was influenced to this desire partly by pure humility, and partly by her preference for a retired, hidden life. She was also actuated by a

higher aim, being apprehensive lest others, in endeavoring to form themselves after her peculiar spiritual character, and in comparing themselves with her, (a propensity which had cost her many heavy hours,) might be unnecessarily tormented, or satisfied without reason. 'God,' she said, in one of her letters to Herder, 'will reveal what ought to be known, in his own time,—it is sufficient that all is known to Him.'

But Herder could not prevail on himself to destroy these letters—neither can I. In reverence for the wishes of the now long-deceased writer, I suppress the greater part; printing but few entire, and only extracts from the remainder, explanatory of her character and her connexion with Herder. This too, not with a view to adding another laurel to Herder's crown, but to preserve the memory of her who was his friend, of a truly devout woman, enlightened by the purest religious ideas; and through her experience, communicated with the most amiable frankness to her friend, to instruct, warn, and encourage others of a similar disposition, who might suffer, as she did at first, from a tendency to artificial culture and technical piety. On this account, I feel assured that many a good heart will enjoy the communication of these genuine confessions of a beautiful soul. Indeed, why should not this rich spiritual portrait of a devout Christian character, be made known, at least in its leading features, after the lapse of forty-three years? The counsel of princes shall perish, but the work of the Lord (especially his work in the human soul) shall be glorified. This is the picture of a pure, conscientious, honest soul, of one who strictly judged herself, and in her humility, could never feel satisfied with her own attainments—(for

the purest souls are always the humblest,) but amid her earnest striving after perfection, perceived more errors and defects in herself, than were visible to any other eye. There are passages in these letters, in which the view one obtains of this noble heart is like looking into heaven—there are such affecting expressions of the deepest humility and self-abhorrence before God, that I cannot bring myself to exhibit all of them to the public through the press. There is no tasteful poetical religiosity, as is too much the fashion of the present day—a fashion as pitiable and dangerous in regard to poetry, as it is to religion—but the pure, heartfelt, genuine Christian piety of a noble soul ripening for heaven.”

*Extract from the first letter of the Countess to Herder, accompanying her new year's gift.*

“After hearing you preach, I do not find myself disposed to praise or blame, but to turn what you have been saying to my own improvement, and to render my soul better fitted to serve God in a rational manner. Your last discourses especially, so impressed, penetrated and cheered me, that I shall remember them as long as I live, and may the grace of God help me to prove it in my whole walk and conversation.

“Were it possible that you could know how many times my soul has wandered in error, I should often think that you spoke to me individually; as it is, I attribute your remarks to your own experience, to your extraordinary understanding, penetration and noble way of thinking, and I then rejoice that a gracious God has given you to us. I hope that your residence among us will be agreeable to you, and that you will aid the exertions of my excel-

lent husband here, who is always so anxious to make a wise selection of the persons whom he entrusts with employments, and of whose high esteem and reliance on yourself you cannot be ignorant. Go on then with confidence, in the important work to which you are dedicated, and be assured that the God to whom you live, will accompany your faithful endeavors with his blessing, and will never suffer you to fail of joy and support.

I hope that you will be so kind as to receive these lines as my instructor, since I desire nothing so much as to walk with assured steps in the path of virtue and piety. As far as it is in my power, I shall always attend your public ministrations, as I obtain through them so much of the instruction which I have needed, but could not receive from my own reflections, for I have already told you that I have committed many mistakes. When any subject arises upon which I need further explanation, I shall apply to you, and as my teacher, you must not refuse to assist me during the, perhaps, short remainder of my life, by the best directions, to redeem the time which has hitherto been wasted.

You will not be offended at my bestowing on you the new year's gift which I am accustomed to present to my teachers, and should be sorry to omit. It is a trifle, of which the only value consists in its being a likeness of my husband, and this relieves me from all hesitation in offering it to your acceptance.

Your obliged friend and servant,

Jan. 1, 1772.

MARIA &c."

II.

"I ought perhaps to apologize for the trouble I occasion you, but in so doing I should fear to offend the noble-



ness of your character, which convinces me that it is a pleasure to you to aid a soul which is seeking the truth.

“As it is not enough for me to pass here and there for a good person, but I wish to be such in reality before God and my conscience, and desire to act from firmer conviction; you may easily imagine how distressed I have often been, when in accordance with established formulas, devised indeed with the best intentions, I have been questioned by others, and have interrogated myself, whether I could distinctly point out the time and hour of agony and gladness; and what sorrowful conclusions and fearful hopes remained for me, when I was unable to return any quite free and satisfactory answer. You may from hence infer how necessary, important and consolatory, your instructions have been to me, and may conceive the pleasure and satisfaction I receive from your presence, a pleasure now doubled, since you afford the agreeable hope that you are satisfied to be with us. I cannot deny that I have experienced the restraint of which you speak, in all its degrees, and I felt it the more, because the persons with whom I then associated had, according to their own confession, gone through the same; they were most excellent and venerable characters, and some of them have passed into eternity, under the firm conviction that it was necessary. I afflicted and tormented myself because I could not feel the same; I repeatedly endeavored with all my might to do like them, yet could not succeed; and when I reflected that perhaps it would be of no use for me to adopt their mode of thinking, I feared lest such a sentiment might be wrong—thus I lived a life of anxiety, and all my thinking only helped to continue my uneasiness.

"I do not cease to bless the hour when divine Providence united me to a husband with whom I have thus far passed a most happy life, and whose instruction and example conducted me to thoughts which brought back rest to my soul. I have attained to the reflection, whether indeed it be possible for man who cannot comprehend his own nature, to comprehend the purposes, ways and ordinances of the Being who conferred it on him—whether, as my lord has often said to me, we do not perceive enough to fill us with gratitude, trust and hope towards God ; and whether I have not enough to do, in studying the lessons of my Redeemer, without striving after rare attainments on my own account. Such considerations have rendered our religion clear, delightful and tranquillizing to me, and often cause me to see with pleasure that my eternity is drawing near. My frame of mind however is not at all times alike. Uneasy recollections, springing from my former experience, often revisit my soul ; especially when I call to mind the last days of some of my dear departed relatives and friends. When rejoicing in their end, I wish to follow their faith. But I often fall short even in those respects wherein I ought to be like them, and then I grow despondent. Nothing therefore can be more desirable for me than a teacher like you, who can guide me in the right way, through the comprehensive view acquired by his own experience.

"You must now know what books are adapted to my capacity ; I entreat you to commend to me such as I can read with advantage. It is time for my soul to acquire and retain distinct and tranquil views ; since the gift with which God has entrusted me [alluding to her little daughter] must receive its first instruction from me, and I may not treat the charge with neglect or perversity."

## III.

“Allow my dejected spirit this question—why is it that we differ so much at different times?—that upon those very occasions when we ought to prove our faith, trust and obedience, we for the first time quite forget them? Might we not be stronger than we are, or does each individual possess only a certain degree of energy, which he cannot overpass? Have the kindness to answer me and relieve my uneasiness, as I must confess myself to be of the number (if I am not the only one) of those whose feelings are so unequal. At one time, I am as certain that towards his creatures God is love, as I am of the existence of heaven and earth; although the ways of God are incomprehensible to us, I am still assured that they abound in goodness and wisdom; and when my season of trial is distant, then I am strong; I can praise and magnify God’s mercy, and even encourage others to trust in it. But when the hour of deep sorrow comes to me, how very little I become! How difficult it then is for me to follow my Redeemer, and say, ‘not my will, O Father, but thine be done.’ What a struggle arises in my soul, between resignation and reluctance.—This ought not to be—and when at last my spirit becomes more tranquil, I am troubled at still finding myself so far behind, remaining ever an admirer, rather than an imitator of Christ—at perceiving that my resignation is often accomplished with streaming eyes, although from my youth up, I have experienced so many proofs of the Divine faithfulness and mercy towards me and mine.

“If you, my excellent teacher, have also known hours of sadness, you will be indulgent to my inquiries and confessions, and not surprised, that to one who walks in

darkness, nothing should be more agreeable, than to find a friend who can be trusted, and who is able to point out the right path. Such a friend you are to me."

The next letter was written by the Countess after the death of her *twin*-brother.

"I am happy to take the first leisure moment to thank you for your sermon last Sunday, which was so soothing to my afflicted sister-in-law, and to my own desolated heart. May the God of all mercy and consolation reward you, not for this only, but for all the kindness, instruction and comfort which I have thus far received from you. Most certainly, through divine mercy, I am indebted to your instructions, my excellent teacher, for not having been utterly cast down in my recent affliction—that, blessed be God! not a despairing thought has assailed me, but while feeling the deepest sorrow, I have had many comforts and been able to look up to heaven, to trust, to believe, and to say, 'good is my Father's will.' The mercy of God has permitted me at this time to learn the power of our religion, else I could never have sustained this most desolating bereavement. My dearest brother, with whom God himself had united me in such peculiar nearness, whom I had so justly called my second father, who was my confidential friend, and whose heart had honored me with its closest intimacy, whose life and society seemed so necessary to my happiness—to lose this brother, was an event the bare thought of which, would once have occasioned me the most intolerable anguish—but now since God has actually taken him away, and so many joys and hopes of my life have vanished with him, I find myself, though fully aware of the whole

extent of my irreparable loss, in possession of a repose and contentment, sweeter than all the pleasures of the world. The grace of God had been preparing me for this separation—all our past brief moments of trial ; your letter, my worthy teacher ; your sermons during the solemnities of Passion week, had tended to put my heart into a condition for sustaining this blow, and I can assure you that in the midst of my affliction, I have thought of your counsels and they have borne me up. Your sermon last Sunday put the seal, if I may so say, to my perfect composure ; it will prevent me from allowing in future a single mournful thought to cause me to forget the gracious God, in whom we live and move and breathe. I will rather praise the Most High, for having rescued my beloved from all anxiety, suffering, and pain. I will give thanks for having enjoyed him so long, that the separation from him becomes a new motive for improving my soul ; I will rejoice in the immortality of our souls, and hope in peace for our everlasting re-union. Whenever his tender orphans and dear widow lay heavy on my heart, I will consign them into the hands of the best of Fathers, and I will see them depart from me with composure. The happiness, the mercies I enjoy, are still great, and infinitely beyond what I deserve, I will cherish them with unceasing gratitude, and seek for no pleasures but those which God himself bestows on me, through the faithful education, so far as I am able, of my child, redoubled affection and respect for my husband, and sincere application of the instructions and doctrines which I may in future hear from you. If in times past you have kindly listened to the moanings of my dejected spirit, you shall now praise God with me for its tranquillity. My brother



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will indeed have a permanent grave in my heart, but I should show myself ungrateful for the exceeding kindness which God has conferred on me through you, my worthy teacher, were I to conceal from you the peace of mind which I also enjoy ; to which, as I mentioned before, you have contributed so much."

The Countess dates the following letter from her country-seat at Baum.

"Your last letter deeply moved me. What delightful instruction you give me for my residence at Baum! With redoubled attention I shall contemplate every blossom, every plant, every bright evening, every beautiful work of God. Most comforting and strengthening to my soul will be each thought connected with them. '*God saw all that he had made, and behold, it was very good!*' Ah! were not all the days of the whole human race then present to the omniscience of the Most High, and did not his grace and wisdom allot what was best for us? Why then should I yield myself to an unlawful sadness? Though at present my lacerated heart must mourn, my God will have patience with my sincere endeavors to show a child-like spirit. I even believe that it will be agreeable to the Creator's will, for me to feel my bitter loss, if I abstain from complaint and lamentation."

LETTERS VIII. AND IX.

"Your present [a poem on the raising of Lazarus] was too precious for thanks. It was singular! But upon losing my never to be forgotten brother, I found in this very history of Lazarus, my strongest consolation, and was often so occupied with it, that I thought several times of

asking you to discourse on the subject, but was deterred by the fear of troubling you. And now you come, as you often have before, to meet my very thoughts. May God bless you and spare you, so far as may be good for you, from those deep sorrows which shall need such alleviations.

“The resurrection, re-union, eternity—they are incomprehensible, yet without the hope of them, I would not desire to be another hour on earth. I should wish for no friend and nothing else that is dear to me. It is faith in these, which gives life to the soul, enhances the pleasure of every tie, and even sweetens the bitterness of separation. Without faith, love and hope, we should be of all creatures the most miserable.—But on all sides the human understanding loses itself, beginning from the contemplation of the first man, of heaven and earth, of ourselves, and of the way in which each one has to go.

“That from the labyrinth of all worlds, the ways of the Everlasting all lead upwards to one grand goal, happiness—this, if I may presume so to say, is my best confession of faith. It is a thought which cheers me, and which I take along with me when Klopstock speaks of wrath, cursing, thunder, and vengeance—against these, whether it be the result of a true conviction or temperament, I cannot say, but all within me rises in opposition; although to other passages of his admirable poem my whole soul can say amen; and these last are particularly soothing to me at this anniversary of recollection.

“In a few days, this memorable year will have expired, and I have not followed my friend and twin companion, as would have seemed so desirable to me while we lived together, and under the first agony of separation. I

still live, and am in truth not less happy than before, though I continue to shed many tears in silence. For him, all is absolutely well in the hand of God. Nothing remains for me but thanks, thanks for all, but especially that my selfish wishes have not been granted; and these thanks must be expressed, not in words, but through God's assisting grace, in my life and walk.

"Your admirable discourses at our last festival gave me more cheerfulness for meeting this anniversary, than the poems of Klopstock; because they imparted to me truths more pure, clear, and for mortal men more necessary and permanent, than the description of those things which neither eye has seen, nor the heart conceived of."

In another letter speaking of her brother, she says,

"When I am not missing him, how I rejoice in his happiness! But when I miss him, (and that is often) I seem to have two hearts, one in heaven, resigned, thankful, rejoicing; the other on earth, weeping and wailing like a perverse child, in opposition to its better wishes and convictions, and often blind to the countless remaining benefits proceeding from God and bestowed, as it were, in compensation of my loss.

"To my shame I confess it, I entered upon the new year with an almost uncontrollable terror. I looked upon the past and the future not with the eye of a Christian—all was mist and darkness! But your exhortation on Friday and Sunday helped me to the song of praise, 'Even so, O my God! cheerfully I commit myself into thy hands.'"

L. O.

[To be continued.]



## MARION'S POETRY.

LITTLE Marion sat in the parlor with her mother one morning, while she was entertaining company. The lady who spoke most, had been visiting in the State of New York, and had spent some pleasant days with an old friend who had a very lovely and gifted child. That little girl was a poetess, and one whose name is now known in other lands than her own. The lady repeated some of the little girl's poems, and among them some sweet verses addressed, by the child, to her mother. Marion's eye met that of her own dear parent, and, at that moment, she felt an earnest wish that the high gift of genius, with which this child had been endowed, could also have been her own.

The morning passed away, the ladies returned to their homes, and Marion's mother went to the nursery. She did not notice the abstracted look of her little daughter as she left her, and, when it was time for the children to eat their dinners, they all wondered where Marion could be. Jemmy searched for her in the garden, and Georgy ran to the play-house: little Susy tottled up stairs to their sleeping-room, but they all returned exclaiming that "Marion was nowhere." Jemmy could not eat his pudding from vexation; but Georgy thought she might return from some long, tiresome walk, or be breathless from a race, and he saved for her his tumbler of milk. Susy laid by her grapes, with the cluster that had been reserved for Marion, and would not eat until her sister was found.

Suddenly her mother started from her chair, opened the parlor door, and there sat Marion. She had drawn

her chair to the centre table, taken her mother's gold pencil, and a letter which lay there, and had just completed her first effort at poetry—one stanza—and there were three pages of a sheet of paper covered with pencil marks. Marion had read fables, and she knew that if her little brothers had also done so, they would tell how the mountain once brought forth a mouse. Her mother she never feared, and very complacently gave her the last edition of the stanza. It was a vast improvement upon the four lines which were first blotted out, and, in its perfected state, it ran thus :

“Mother dear, I love you well ;  
I love you better than tongue can tell ;  
And mother dear, will you love me,  
If I will good and pleasant be ?”

“And so, Marion, you forgot your dinner while rhyming for me ?” Said her mother with a bright smile.

“Yes, mamma,” replied Marion, sadly, “but I fear it is not so good as that I heard this morning.”

Her mother did not reply, and she ate her dinner with a heavy heart.

That night, when the little ones were asleep, Marion arose, and stole by the moonlight into her mother's room. She was sitting at her work-table, but a book lay open before her, and Marion's verse was placed in it as a mark. She was somewhat disappointed and grieved at this careless treatment of her poem, as she called it.

“Mother,” said she, hurriedly, could my poem be any better ? Shall I ever write like *her* ?”

Her mother drew her to her side, and a warm tear and kiss met together on her cheek.

“No,” she replied, “you will never write like her. Indeed I know not that I should wish a child of mine to

be so fatally endowed ; but it will make me very happy if you cultivate your powers as well as she does her rich talent."

"But you seemed pleased at the lady's recital, mother ; and, indeed, I saw tears of emotion in your eyes."

"I was astonished, my daughter, at the talents the little girl exhibited in her poems ; I was delighted at the purity of thought and expression, and moved to tears because the rich gift was so often laid upon the altar of filial affection, that she so often wrote of and to her mother, and thus showed who and what was dearest to her heart."

"But, mother, you do not seem much pleased with mine. Perhaps, it is not so good, but then I am your own little girl."

"But not my own little genius," replied her mother, smiling. "No, Marion, it would be foolish for me to encourage in you any propensity to rhyme. You might, by much effort, acquire a habit of stringing verses together, but I do not think you could ever be a poetess."

"Mother, will you point out the faults in that verse ?" and Marion, at that moment, thought she had imposed upon her kind mother, an impossible task.

"Well, my love," she replied, laughing, "as you have played author, I will play critic. The first line is very well, and I hope very true. In the second omit '*I*,' and change *better* to *more*—'Love you more than tongue can tell.' But when you knew that I always love you, and am particularly pleased when you are very good and pleasant, was it not foolish to finish the stanza with that question ?"

Marion blushed, hung her head, and looked very silly.

"Do not be vexed with yourself, my child, nor think that I am vexed with you—No, I am greatly pleased with the affection for me which you have displayed in this effort; but I should have been as much pleased with the same time and exertion spent in some manner more strictly useful, upon something more perfectly within the limits of your abilities. There are many things you can do to gratify me, and all good, kind deeds are 'acted poetry.' Every great and noble action, if not suggestive of a poem, or the foundation of one, is in itself a poem. But these great deeds, these noble poems, are called for from but few of us. Then let those, whose lot it is to perform the minor duties of life, make it their great act to perform all little ones well and promptly. Let their poem be correct, cheerful and harmonious, and it will always be pleasing. Do you understand me, my child? do you know what poetry I would have from you?"

"Yes, mamma, you would have me be very good," replied Marion, but her ideas of goodness had derived a noble beauty from her conversation with her mother which she could not then express.

From that time, whenever her mother wished to require from her any act of sacrifice, self-denial, or the performance of any difficult duty, she had but to say, 'Now, Marion, may I have some poetry?' and the little girl was a heroine at once.

When several years had passed away, the father of Marion resolved to remove from New England, to a wild, rude place in the "far west." Marion saw that the thought of it made her mother sad, and noticed the tear that stole into her eye when it was decided that they should go. She stepped softly to her side, and, throwing

her arms round her neck, whispered, "Mother, you shall not be without *poetry* there," and her mother smiled, for she felt assured that in her noble-hearted child she would have a constant support.

And so it was ; for, when they had exchanged their nice home for a log-cabin, their pleasant neighbors for utter strangers, the pleasures of a delightful town for the discomforts of an uncultivated waste, it was Marion who was the joy and hope of them all. Her cheerful, pleasant ways were like a glad song to them then, and her patience, perseverance and trust were like the chantings of a holy hymn. But there came a time when she was to be sadly tried. Her mother was taken very sick, and there was no one who could relieve her pain, and restore her to health. Marion knelt to the Great and Good Physician, but she pleaded in vain for her mother's life. Before her voice and strength were wholly gone, she called her daughter to her bedside, and, placing in her arms her last treasure, the babe of but a few weeks of age, she said to her, "When the great poet would leave to the world some memento of his talents and acquirements, he clusters around one grand idea all his high and beautiful thoughts. His acquirements in the past, his emotions in the present, his hopes and aspirations for the future are all embodied in one beautiful epic or drama. Let the care of that immortal soul be the poem of your life ; let your knowledge, hopes, desires and aspirations all concentrate upon this little being. In imparting, you will receive, for your own mind will expand with all that is noble which you give to this dear child. Then in some future time, you may hope to hear the breathings of its beatified spirit, like a lofty anthem, chanted forever and ever around the throne of the Eternal." H. F.



## MARY AND JESUS.

THE summer morn was soft and still,  
In sunny Palestine,  
While Mary at the cottage door,  
Beneath the shady vine,  
The flaxen thread spun earnestly,  
To weave the garment white ;—  
And at her feet the " young child " played  
With face so calmly bright ;—  
His little robe was filled with flowers,  
Those lilies, wondrous fair,  
Which grew, o'er all the hills and fields  
Luxuriantly there.

He watched his mother's busy hands,  
Then looked upon his flowers,—  
Then upward, where the sky so blue,  
Its radiant beauty showers :—  
Then to his mother mild he spoke—  
" The robes my lilies wear  
Are not like those you spin for me  
With so much toil and care ;—  
The warm sky and the beaming sun  
But look upon the earth,  
And all the flowers in garments bright  
Come springing into birth."

' The Father good,' the mother said,  
" The lilies robes hath given :"—  
And then she paused—and turned her eyes,  
Unto the still, deep heaven.—  
' And he hath clothed our hearts also,  
With garments brighter far ;  
With robes of love, more fair to see,  
Than morning's silvery star ;—  
We do not toil and spin for these,  
But like the trusting flowers,

Only in faith look up to Him,  
And these blest gifts are ours."

Then Jesus bended down his head,  
And sat all silently,  
While visions through his purest soul  
Were swiftly gliding by.  
He spoke no word, but in his eye  
There shone the holiest light,—  
His mother saw—and then she knew  
That ever fair and bright,  
The garments which her dear child wore,  
Would more and more become,  
Like to the heaven which smiled on him—  
His own forever home.

M. E. R.

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### THE TWIN SISTERS.

"NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE."

ANNIE and Margaret Duncan were twin sisters, united in the most cordial and tender friendship. Their father had been engaged in business for many years, as owner of a large manufacturing establishment, in one of the pleasant central towns of Massachusetts. The two girls from their earliest years had been playmates and schoolmates. They had wandered together about the beautiful banks of the river which flowed through their native town, till every fine prospect, every green secluded nook, every remarkable tree in its neighborhood had become as familiar to them, as the stairs and closets of their own home. They knew where the first, delicate wind flow-

ers would look up with their pale faces, to the chilly sky, trembling in the breeze, like some of those poor, ill-clad little girls, whom we meet shivering in our wintry streets, when we are wrapped in furs; the columbine, in its gay dress, might nod triumphantly from the crevices of what seemed inaccessible rocks, but they knew well, through what winding, tangled, briery paths they might gain the summit, and seize upon the slender stalks; if the May-flowers bloomed, in fancied security, beneath the crisp leaves which Autumn had spread over their tiny buds, the brown veil was soon removed by the busy fingers of these flower-lovers; and when in the marshy fields, the brilliant cardinals opened their rich scarlet petals, or the gentian with its delicate fringe smiled away its short life and rare beauty under the blue autumnal sky,—then might their laugh be heard, ringing through the fields and woods, as a sudden splash betokened that one had lost her balance in reaching too far over the brook for the unbending cardinals, or that a shoe-full of mud had been gained instead of the flower of heaven's own blue. Nor was the summer only their time for rambling. Undaunted by the severest cold they roamed through the leafless woods, admiring the brilliant pavement of unsullied snow, the trees swinging their pendent, graceful branches, laden with those icy stores, which the sun, that great magician, converts by his mere glance into the most brilliant of jewels. When the streams and ponds were frozen, no skaters in the village were more active and successful than Annie and Margaret; and it was even said that they had been seen, on a moonlight evening, steering two sleds so well down a long coast, that evidently they had practised the exercise almost as much as any of the boys.

In the equal enjoyment of these natural pleasures the hearts of these two girls became knit to each other with firmest ties ; the sunset glory, as it flooded the vale in beauty, and then gradually lifted itself from the earth, glancing last upon the old church-spire before it faded into the evening grey, seemed to Annie to want half its splendor if Margaret's eye had not met it with hers ; while to Margaret's ear the bluebird's song, seemed somewhat deficient in sweetness, if she could not say to her sister, " Hark how sweet !" With the basket of hazelnuts, which they had gathered with chilled fingers beneath the trees for their little brother Robert, or the kettle of berries, picked beneath a hot sun, with which they hoped to surprise their dear mother, they wandered cheerfully home, their only dispute being which should do the most to relieve the other of the burden.

Still with so great mutual enjoyment, there was a wide difference in their characters. Annie would have been content to live as the butterflies, sporting away her existence, with no more serious thought of responsibility when twelve summers had passed over her head, than when she first learned to run alone. Her father having great wealth they lived luxuriously ; he felt unwilling to deny his children any request, and, feeling secure in his fortune, lavished it upon them with unsparing hand. Their mother often reminded them that it might not always be so ; for in our country fortunes are sometimes lost as quickly as they are made, and those, who have lived in opulence one year, may be needy or dependent the next.

" Beside, my daughters," the fond mother would add, " though you could be perfectly assured that we should

continue as rich as now to the very end of your lives, it would be equally your duty to prepare yourselves to be useful women. The highest culture of every talent which our Father bestows, is the solemn duty of each man, woman and child; none are too young, too insignificant to come under this law."

"But I cannot see, mother, that I have any duties," said Annie. "There is Lucy Woodberry—she has something that is her duty to do; her mother is ill, and her father has more than he can do to support the children, and Lucy, though she is no older than we are, supports herself by binding shoes; now I see that Lucy is doing her duty, but would you wish me to spend all day in binding shoes?"

"No, Annie, for that would be a waste of your time, situated as you now are; still I would have you able and willing to learn every thing by which a woman can make her home more happy, and the little circle, through which her influence may extend, better or wiser."

"Well, mother," was the reply, "you know I make my bed every morning before I go out, both winter and summer; is not that doing something useful?"

"What is your reason for doing it, dear; because you think it right to be useful, or because you would really feel ashamed to see Margaret's regularly made by her, and yours left for the chambermaid?"

"Ah, Mother wise, how can you guess my thoughts so well!" and the careless girl, impatient of rebuke as she was of labor, started laughing from her chair, and, seizing Margaret by both shoulders, pushed her to the door, exclaiming "Come away, Peggy, as fast as you can run; for I must find where the squirrel, which we saw yesterday under the walnut tree, has found a hole for his home,



and whether he has some nuts laid up for winter ; I know if I stay five minutes longer, mother will give me some work to do, or make me sit down before that tiresome drawing board." And kissing her hand playfully to her mother, she ran out of the room, dragging her sister with her.

They were so engaged, searching among the stones and decayed trunks and fallen leaves for the home of the little nut-eater, that this conversation was quite forgotten till they were walking to school next morning. Then Annie, remembering the frosts had been so frequent lately, that the sumach and maple leaves were probably in the most beautiful state to be pressed for winter ornaments, declaimed loudly against school, as keeping her from gathering the bright leaves in good season.

"The truth is, Margaret, I am tired to death of school ; who wishes to sit all the morning poring over stupid books ? There is no use in my learning Arithmetic, for I shall never be a merchant ; I can talk and write well enough now without any more Grammar ; as for History, what do I care for all the old kings of Rome and England ! they did nothing but fight, and I do not approve of fighting ; writing always cramps my hand and inks my fingers ; then Latin, oh Latin ! I think the person who first thought of teaching that to girls, ought to have his name printed in the blackest ink, and hung up in every school-room to be hissed at."

"Why, Nannie," said Margaret, trying to restrain her mirth, but suddenly laughing outright, "how fast you can rattle off such nonsense : One would think your preference was to be an ignorant, instead of an educated girl."

"And true enough it is so, if lessons are to interfere in this way with my pleasures. It really amazes me to see you go into school so cheerfully every day, and look so happy while you are industriously occupied there. If I really thought, as you do, that it was my duty, perhaps I should like to study ; but my heart is among the brooks and hills, and not in those stupid pages. When I turn over the leaves of the book, I think how unpleasant their rustle is compared with that of the forest leaves ; in truth, sister, I prefer climbing Prospect Hill, looking so tempting yonder in this October sunshine, to toiling up the hill of science ; and I shall content myself with learning what is necessary to know, and let every thing else go."

"Ah !" replied Margaret, "we have talked of this so often, Nannie, that I cannot say to you anything more than I have already said. My own conscience never fails to rebuke me, if I omit to do all that I can to improve myself, 'neglect not the gift that is in thee,' sounds ever to me from my inmost soul ; it seems to me as the voice of my Heavenly Father, warning and encouraging me to the best use of all the faculties which He has given me. Perhaps, dear, you may sometime arouse to this same feeling, and then I shall rejoice for you."

"No ; never hope that, Margaret, for I go farther from it every day," She spoke the truth ; for a wrong feeling indulged carries us farther and farther from the power of seeing the right, and makes it more difficult for us to hear the Divine Voice, which speaks from the depths of our holiest affections.

A year after this time Mr. and Mrs. Duncan decided that their daughters should go to Boston to receive, in the

school of a gentleman there, such instructions as their own village could not afford. They had never been separated from their parents, and with tearful eyes heard the announcement of the plan ; to pass a whole year away from all which could seem like home, to live among strangers during all that time, and miss their father's morning greeting, their mother's hourly care,—what could reconcile them to it ! Annie repeated again and again that it could not be ; they should be perfectly miserable, and all the knowledge they could gain would never compensate them for being separated from her parents and dear Robert. Mr. Duncan so represented the propriety of doing it, that Margaret soon acceded to the plan ; Annie, rather than to be separated from her sister and friend, opposed it no longer.

None but those who have been thus separated from home and all its dear delights, can estimate the heart-sickness of the twins the first day of their residence in the city, after their parents had returned home. It was the day of entrance in their new school ; and the friendly tone of their teacher failed to put them at ease, when the hasty glance which they cast round the room showed not one familiar face.

“ Oh ! if we were only in the woods, or any place in the world but here ! ” whispered Annie as they took the seats assigned them ; and Margaret's quivering lip showed that she was trying to suppress the same feeling. When the first day of trial was over, and the sisters, locked in each other's arms, laid their faces on the same pillow, the uncontrollable burst of tears told what each had suffered ; sobbing they sank to sleep, to dream of the beloved fireside and hear the murmuring of the village

stream. But this first grief soon wore away, returning but rarely to cloud their happy hours.

And how was their time spent? It was to Margaret a year of great improvement; the advantages of her situation were not lost upon her; her studies were pursued with unwearied diligence; her natural taste for drawing she cultivated with the best teacher, while Annie protested against having anything more to do than was required at school, and would not use the pencil. After a few days of industry in school, she relapsed into her former habits; at the close of the year they returned home, one, with the sweet consciousness of duty done; the other, to repent in after years her wasted hours and slighted privileges.

Years rolled by, strengthening the tender affection of these sisters, and strengthening too the habits which each had formed. But a great change had come over their mode of life. By repeated and most unexpected losses, Mr. Duncan had seen all his wealth pass from his possession; the fine spacious dwelling house, where Annie and Margaret had slept in their cradle, was sold by the auctioneer, and, with a few articles of their plainest furniture, they found a new home in a very small and humble house. The household work was to be done by their own hands, and every luxury to which they had been accustomed was to be resigned. These privations were borne with cheerful countenances and willing hearts; they felt how little these outward circumstances had to do with real happiness; and the fervent, abiding love with which their hearts warmed towards each other, made any spot a happy one where they could be united. In their poverty the sisters felt they ought to assist their fa-

ther, whose enfeebled health rendered exertion painful to him. In what way their assistance should be given was the question. Margaret was well fitted to teach ; but there was already a good school in the village, and it was settled in the family council, that she must not leave home and all the dear ones who clung so fondly to her there, to take a school elsewhere. By giving lessons in French and Italian to a class of girls, and by selling her needle-work, she received what made them all more comfortable. But poor Annie, what could she do ? She had always despised sewing, and so had never become skilful in the use of her needle ; she had suffered herself to remain ignorant at school of what she might have acquired with a common share of labor, and now ignorant she must remain ; household work of all kinds she had avoided, and now felt her helplessness ; she might have assisted her father in writing, of which he had much to do, but her writing was so bad as to be nearly illegible ; and though she might have relieved him often by attending to his money affairs, she could not, for she had never expected to be a merchant. With heavy heart she compared herself with Margaret, sighing for the impossible return of school-days, that she might use well the hours she had so unwisely wasted.

Robert, their younger brother, had entered college when his father was a wealthy man ; but his failure in business, the next year, made it impossible for him to support his son there, as he had expected. Robert however, energetic and active, determined to use every exertion in his power to support himself through his collegiate course. By the most rigid economy in term time, and keeping school in the vacations, he defrayed the whole



expense of his education ; devoting himself with untiring assiduity to his studies, and thinking no labor hard which should fit him to be a useful man and good lawyer. He received the first honors of his class, and returned home to prosecute the study of the law. But after a short time, the eyes which had served him so well began to fail in their office ; intense study had injured them to such a degree, that the physician assured him blindness must be the consequence of farther use of that delicate organ, and he found himself obliged to refrain entirely from study. It was a disappointment too bitter for words to describe ; he had pictured to himself the eminence he should attain in his profession ; the comforts he should provide for the dear home-circle, and now to be suddenly cut off from this, was a blight to his fondest hopes. He did not suffer alone ; for what pained one heart in that united family, pained all. Margaret and Annie talked to each other for hours of what might possibly be done for him. The wonderful cures effected by a celebrated oculist in a distant city, had been reported in their village ;—but how to get enough money to meet the expense of the journey and the medical care ? Margaret redoubled her labors, hoping to save enough from their necessity to accomplish it. With her whole heart would Annie have shared the toil ; but she could do very little. All that was saved, and carefully placed in their bureau, they counted again and again ; but it was a slow and scanty gathering, and their hearts sometimes failed in their generous, secret plan.

One evening a German, who been residing a short time in their village, mentioned, in Margaret's presence, that he was very desirous of procuring sketches of various

fine views in that place to carry to a friend in Hamburg, who retained a warm affection for it, as the spot of his nativity ; that probably nothing would gratify him so much, as thus to recall the scenes of his boyhood's pleasures. He added, he must however give up this design, as he was himself unskilled in the use of the pencil, and could find no artist in the village. Margarette modestly offered to try what she could do ; her drawing lessons in Boston had given her power to sketch faithfully from nature, and she said to herself, " Here will be something more for Robert's box." As Annie wandered with her over the spots where their young feet had bounded so often, she sighed to think the only share she could take in her sister's occupation, was to watch its progress.

The drawings were completed, liberally paid for, and pronounced excellent by the gentleman who had engaged them ; the money was deposited in its destined box, and Margarette went on with her daily work with a new impulse.

But what was her surprise to receive, six weeks after, a letter from Hamburg, from the gentleman to whom the drawings had been carried ; a letter expressing the most enthusiastic delight with the sketches, and unqualified admiration of their execution. Leaving his Massachusetts home when a boy, Mr. G. had resided ever since in Germany, where he had acquired immense wealth. There, a bachelor, amid the complicated cares of active business, living amid the dark walls of warehouses and city streets, his heart had often turned with lingering fondness to the sylvan beauties of his boyhood's home. Flitting fancies of gurgling streams, the old half-ruined mill, the green where he had played foot-ball, and the

little pond, where he had launched his mimic ships in early, careless days, stole ever and anon into the thoughts of the opulent merchant, and seemed like some sweet dream, brightening his daily life. But when the very stream and woods and old familiar spots stood before him, faithfully represented upon the paper, and recalling, with incredible freshness, the haunts of the companions he had loved, and the scenes of his joy with them, the strong man was overcome, and a flood of tears poured over the cheeks which had been deeply furrowed by earthly cares. He wrote in terms of unbounded gratitude to her, who had given him such gratification, and inclosed a draft of 500 dollars, as no more than sufficient compensation for the pleasure he had received. He expressed too his determination to wind up his business concerns in Hamburg, and return to the place of his birth; for those drawings had uttered to him a call he could not resist.

Margarett threw the letter into her mother's lap and, wild with delight, danced about the room, exclaiming, "Now for the journey to New York!" for the sum she was to receive was far beyond what was necessary for that.

With no loss of time, Robert's trunk was prepared, and he on his way to consult the oculist, and place himself under his care. It was a slow and tedious process; but there was no doubt of a cure; with a light and grateful heart, Margarett closed her eyes each night; for she felt she had been allowed by our Father to be the means of procuring for her dear brother this great blessing. When his sight should be restored, he must return again to his professional studies, and she sometimes feared that he

might suffer again in the same way ; but trust in His love who rules all things for the best, calmed all those fears.

He returned after some months to his home and his studies ; at the same time arrived the Hamburg merchant, intending to make his native place his future home. But habit was too strong ; though he found much to charm him, he missed sadly what had passed away ; he asked in vain for his early friends ; most of them had gone to other parts of the country, or to the spirit-land, and he felt alone among the glens and hills of his youthful days. He soon returned to Europe, but not without having formed the most friendly connexion with Mr. Duncan's family. He assured Robert it was too soon for him to study again, and as he was strongly attracted by his manly and ingenuous character, he invited him to journey with him through France and Italy ; and on his return supplied him with funds to continue his studies.

When Robert commenced practice as a lawyer, he placed his first fee in Margaret's hands, saying, " It is yours, my blessed sister ; for to your devoted love I owe all that I can ever be in my profession." And when many years had passed, and the youth and maiden had become the distinguished judge and the honored matron, his voice would tremble and his eye glisten, as he related to his children, what a ministering angel Aunt Margaret had been to him in his day of need.

Poor Annie ! she never, when a child, thought it necessary to fit herself to be a useful woman.

H. E. S.

## THE S. S. TEACHER'S BEST TIME FOR PREPARATION.

No one can be a really good teacher without careful and thorough preparation from week to week. The most gifted minds need to prepare themselves by study and meditation each week in order to avoid monotony and that they may give life and spirit to their instructions. For still stronger reasons, teachers with only average or ordinary capacity ought often to replenish their minds with material. No mind has such a fund of inventive genius that it may not be aided by drawing from other sources than its own thoughts. Those teachers who are engaged in engrossing pursuits have need to set apart a particular time each week for the performance of their duty of preparation, and they should let no ordinary pleasures or duties encroach upon the season thus set apart or appropriated to this necessary, excellent and delightful work. Such sentiments as we have been expressing are held by most of those who are practically acquainted with Sabbath school instruction. We are glad that they are, and wish they were felt more deeply and acted upon more faithfully than they are.

There is another condition connected with preparation which is as important as its thoroughness, but which is not, we think, duly regarded. We refer to the *TIME* of the preparation. We are of opinion that the later in the week any given amount of preparatory study is performed the better; and the less time there is intervening between the *studying* of a lesson and the *giving of instructions* upon it the more full, distinct, earnest and interesting those instructions will be. And the reason of this is obvious.



If the studying of the Sunday lesson is the last thing done by the teacher before going to the class its subject is uppermost in the thoughts ; its principles, illustrations and details are familiar and distinctly present to the mind. But if on the other hand four or five days are suffered to pass after the preparatory study of a lesson is performed, before the instructions upon it are given, the duties, cares, thoughts, and labors of those four or five days will have usurped the first place in the teacher's mind. Many of the facts, details, and illustrations, and perhaps some of the principles of the lesson will have been forgotten. Only a general impression of it will remain. It will not be present to the teacher's thoughts in all its fulness of detail. It will not be fresh to him. He cannot speak about it with spirit, with interest, with animation. He will hesitate and falter ; he will speak only in generalities or abstractions and this mode of instruction seldom interests children. If we hear an eloquent lecture or sermon the subject of it for the time deeply impresses our minds. We ponder it and speak of it to those about us. Let a week pass by and the case is changed. The interests, cares and duties of that week have employed our hands and busied our thoughts. The eloquence and fervency of the preacher or the lecturer may not be and probably are not forgotten, but their glowing sentiments which for the time seemed to pervade and take possession of our minds have been superseded by, or buried underneath other more recent impressions, thoughts and experiences. This results from a law of the mind that the things last learned are most distinct and clear in its conceptions and most impressive to its feelings. As in looking at a landscape the near objects are most clearly seen, look larger

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in proportion, and are more apt to call forth remark than those more distant, so in the mind's experience those things which are recent, (or near in point of time,) are more clear to its perceptions, more impressive to its feelings, seem comparatively more important, and are more likely to occasion remark than those long past. For example : we meet a friend in the street who has just risen from perusing the ' Advocate of Peace,' or has just heard a speech from Garrison or Gough. No sooner have salutations passed than the friend earnestly or indignantly exclaims, " When will people learn the folly and wickedness of war ?" or " Is n't it abominable that in this country, boasting as she does of her free institutions, there should be one person out of every seven of her whole population held in abject servitude more than seven-fold worse than that from which our patriotic revolutionary fathers delivered us ?" or " What awful perversions of the faculties does strong drink occasion ! How many gifted intellects has it besotted, how many loving hearts has it maddened to more than beastly ferocity ! How many vigorous frames has it laid low in untimely and ignominious graves ! How many happy homes has it ruined ! The earth is black with this sin of intemperance. The blood of its victims crieth from the ground in every corner of the civilized world, and ' there is an ear which heareth the cry.' " Meet that same friend a week afterwards and we might be with him for hours and hear not a word about either of these subjects, for the simple reason that he has since been attending to and interested in other matters and these more recent experiences are uppermost in his thoughts and most distinctly present to his imagination and affections.

If the preparatory study and meditation of the Sunday school teacher is attended to on Saturday night and Sunday morning, and he goes directly afterward to his class, the subject of the lesson is uppermost in his thoughts, and clear to the mind. His feelings are impressed and moved by the subject from the contemplation of which he has just risen. He speaks to his class upon it earnestly and freely. He urges it upon them with the true eloquence of hearty feeling. No hesitations and doubts hurt the effect of his instructions. But if the preparations are made early in the week, four or five days, with all their engrossing cares, duties, and anxieties intervene between the study and the recitation. These experiences will have driven from the mind the facts and principles of the lesson, almost all its particulars will have been forgotten and only its general features and impressions will remain, and no teacher can do justice to himself or to his class who teaches in generalities or abstractions. It is the line upon line upon precept upon precept, that fixes the attention and impresses the minds of children. We have been led to this train of remark from the impression that wrong practice on this point may exist. Some may suppose that if they bestow a given amount of studious labor on a lesson, it is of no importance at what time in the week that study is performed. Or they may think it meritorious to perform this preparatory study early in the week lest if they defer it till later they may be prevented from performing it at all. We approve of teachers giving to the work of preparation a high rank among their duties. But for the reasons to which we have adverted, the later in the week it is done, the better for



all concerned. We have of course no objection to teachers studying both early in the week and late in the week, but if they can do but *one*, we decidedly prefer the latter and later period.

A. C.

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THE CARD-HOUSE.

Gentle neighbors, wherefore laugh,  
When the wind, like idle chaff,  
Blows away my careful pile?—  
Is it worth your smile?

You build castles in the air;  
Morning sees them tall and fair:  
But, when shuts the eye of day,  
Tell me, where are they?

Read ye not a lesson here—  
Ye who mammon's temples rear?  
Know ye not your glories must  
Crumble soon to dust?

Gentle neighbors, spare your laugh,  
When the wind, like idle chaff,  
Blows away my careful pile:—  
What build ye the while?

C. T. B.

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KNOWLEDGE and power, instead of being a substitute for justice, instead of exalting the oppressor, only deepen his guilt and fill the measure of his sin.

C FOLLEN.

## BE HONEST.

As I was one day walking through Quincy Market in Boston, my attention was suddenly attracted by a scene which I took pleasure in witnessing. Although it is not often my happiness to witness such true honesty displayed, I hope it is by no means uncommon. Two little boys were passing along in the same direction as myself, when they discovered a delicious peach lying in their very path. It was at such a distance from the fruit stalls that it was very evident some purchaser had dropped it. The peach was very tempting, and too many otherwise well disposed boys would have felt justified in devoting it to their own use. But not so with our little friends. Instead of saying to themselves, "it is ours for we found it in the public pathway," they looked about in search of the right owner. At some distance ahead they saw a gentleman carrying a quantity of peaches which he had purchased. He did not know that he had lost any, but the lads supposing the peach which they had found to be his property, hastened to restore it to him. For this service they received his thanks and went their way with contented hearts, for the consciousness of having done right imparts lightness of heart to the doer. How much happier must they have been after receiving the gentleman's thanks for their kindness, than they would have been if they had gone into some bye place and ate their new found prize.

A few days after this occurrence I was passing by this same market-house. Along the outer edge of the side-walk were ranged the wagons of the hard working farmers who had come to the city to dispose of the products of their farms. Much beautiful fruit was there exposed by them for sale. Apples, pears, and peaches in

great variety, enough to tempt the appetite of the most fastidious of the passers by. But how different a scene did I witness here from that which occurred but a few days before within the market-house—several dirty and neglected boys were sauntering about and would go and examine the fruit at this or that wagon whenever a prospect of a successful theft presented itself. I waited not long before one of the boys took up a peach, and, looking a moment to ascertain whether he was observed, started with a quick pace and was soon out of sight. How great the contrast, my young readers, and how forcibly were these scenes impressed upon my memory. Months have passed by, but still they are as fresh as if they had transpired but yesterday. Can you doubt which boy was the happiest?

J. H. A.

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THE OLD HERMIT.

A YOUNG man, who had great cause of complaint against another, told an old hermit that he was resolved to be avenged. The good old man did all that he could to dissuade him, but seeing that it was impossible, and the young man persisted in seeking vengeance, he said to him, "At least, my young friend, let us pray together, before you execute your design."

Then he began to pray in this way: "It is no longer necessary, O God, that thou shouldst defend this young man and declare thyself his protector, since he has taken upon himself the right of seeking his own revenge."

The young man fell on his knees before the old hermit, and prayed for pardon for his wicked thought, and declared that he would no longer seek revenge of those who had injured him.



